

HANDOUT – APRIL 5, LAND USE CAUCUS

Recommendations

Promote Cross-cutting Funding and Planning Programs

1. The State should **provide additional incentives to developers and local governments** to plan and build using more compact and sustainable development patterns. This could be done through further CEQA streamlining for infill development and associated infrastructure depending on SB 226's effectiveness, further reductions in brownfields liability for innocent land purchasers (<http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/laws/liability/index.html>), prioritizing planning grants, and providing further incentives (financial and other) to encourage compact and sustainable development.
2. The State should **develop and promote performance-based planning with metrics**. Examples include establishing a baseline for each watershed for impervious surfaces, vehicle miles traveled per capita, comprehensive flood management using floodplain planning, and land coverage. These metrics should be the basis for evaluating projects that request discretionary State funding, grants, and other financial assistance.
3. Land use and water planning agencies local, regional and state should conduct **integrated review of long-range land use planning documents**, infrastructure master plans, and financing strategies to ensure adequate support for long-term growth, and compact and sustainable development.

Integrate Regional Water Management and Regional/Local Land Use Plans

4. **Regional planning agencies could continue and expand their participation in the regional blueprint planning process.**
5. Regional planning agencies **should address water management issues** in their blueprint plans and SCSs.
6. **Local agency formation commissions (LAFCOs) could consider water management issues** in the context of their principal purposes, which include: discouraging urban sprawl, preserving open space and prime agricultural lands, efficiently provide government services, and encouraging the orderly formation and development of local agencies based upon local conditions and circumstances (Government Code 56301).
7. **Local governments could coordinate with water planning agencies** to promote integration of land use and water management planning. This could be done by:
 - Reviewing and submitting comments on the Urban Water Management Plans adopted by water agencies within their jurisdiction
 - Participating in the Integrated Regional Water Management Planning and Implementation Processes
 - Continuing to effectively implement SB 610 and SB 221, which require land use approvals to consider whether sufficient water supplies are available to serve new development
 - Engaging relevant water management agencies to participate in General Plan updates that address water issues

8. **When conducting General Plan updates, local governments could address relevant water management issues, including water supply, water quality, and flood risk reduction.** This can be done by adding water management policies to the General Plan elements currently required by statute, or by preparing an optional Water Element not required by statute. The discussion of water issues in General Plans should be informed by IRWMPs and Water Plan Regional Reports applicable to the city or county.
9. **Local and regional water management and flood agencies could** coordinate with local governments to promote integration of land use and water management planning. This could be done by:
 - Participating in the General Plan process in the communities they serve and submitting comments on General Plan updates
 - Including local agency representatives Regional Water Management Groups, which are the governing bodies for IRWMPs
 - Collaborating with local governments to identify opportunities to maximize water conservation, groundwater recharge, stormwater capture and other water management strategies that rely on local land use planning for effective implementation
10. Tribal communities would like to see local government **extend the required consultation of SB 18 to include compatibility issues with local land use planning and water supply and quality.** This consultation would provide California Native American Tribes an opportunity to participate in local land use decisions at an early planning stage for the purpose of protecting or mitigating land use impacts to watersheds and floodplains of which Tribes have an interest.
11. Local governments should **implement specific land use planning and regulatory measures to reduce flood risks,** as described in the Integrated Flood Management RMS recommendations.

Provide Funding, Incentives and Technical Assistance

12. **Increased State funding and technical assistance should be provided for the following programs and policies that promote compact, sustainable development:**
 - Development and implementation of regional blueprint plans
 - Development and implementation of SCSs
 - General Plan updates that implement blueprint plans and SCSs, and address water issues
 - General plan updates, zoning code updates, specific plans, and other land use controls that promote compact sustainable development in addition to provisions in blueprint plans and SCSs
 - Coordinated state and local government programs that incentivize infill development. These are especially important since tax increment financing by redevelopment agencies is no longer available as a tool to incentivize infill development.
 - General Plan updates and other local government programs that use land use policies to help adapt to climate change
 - Local government adoption of green building codes with LID principles that include water conservation and reduction of impervious surfaces
 - Continued use of the CEQA process to mitigate the significant impacts of new development on resources including, but not only, prime agricultural land, wildlife habitat, open space, floodplains, recharge areas, wetlands, and water supply
13. **State grant and funding decisions should provide incentives for and give priority to** projects that are consistent with:

- Strategic Growth Council sustainability objectives
 - AB 857: state planning priorities that promote urban infill, and protect environmental and agricultural resources
 - Regional Sustainable Communities Strategies (SCS)
 - Integrated Regional Water Management Plans (IRWMPs)
 - Regional blueprint plans
 - Green building codes that incorporate LID principles and reduce impervious surfaces (especially near waterways) and design standards (such as LEED-ND and Cal GREEN)
14. **State grant and funding decisions should recognize the unique challenges of promoting sustainable rural development.**
 15. **Regional planning agencies should provide financial incentives and technical assistance to local governments** to implement blueprint plans and SCSs in their communities.
 16. **The State should develop, make available, and provide technical assistance for a “land use tool” that allows planning and water resources agencies to evaluate the life cycle water resources infrastructure costs of conventional development patterns, as compared to compact and sustainable development patterns.**

Enhance Research and Data Gathering

17. **The State should provide funding, technical information, and best practices, and publicize accurate and relevant water resources information for use by local governments and developers.** The State could serve as an information clearinghouse for regional water supply, water quality, flood management, and climate change vulnerability information that local governments can use in preparing General Plans. Such information would also provide comprehensive water resources information and policies to land use project applicants during pre-application meetings.
18. **The State should encourage and support more scientific, engineering, planning, social, and economic research on the benefits and impacts of resource-efficient development patterns,** develop an inventory of best practices by local governments and land management agencies, and provide a user friendly portal for information access.
19. **The State should evaluate the effectiveness of the package of flood management laws** that were enacted in 2007 (see Coordinating Land Use and Flood Management in this chapter) in coordinating land use and flood planning, and work to provide recommendations for changes to existing laws and their implementation as appropriate.
20. **The State should evaluate the effectiveness of SB 610 and SB 221 in coordinating land use and water supply planning,** and recommend improvements to these laws or their implementation as appropriate. The State should develop guidance on how SB 610 and SB 221 water supply assessments and verifications should address the effects of climate change and Delta export uncertainties on supply reliability.

Promote Interagency Coordination

21. **The State should identify strategies, including performance metrics to improve communication, coordination, and information-sharing** among local agencies, regional planning agencies, and local water agencies and watershed managers.
22. **The State should promote improved coordination between local general plans and LAFCO policies** on boundary changes to ensure adequate water supply with effective flood management.